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BY THE U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

Report To The Chair, Task Force On Economic
Security, Select Committee On Children,
Youth And Families
House Of Representatives

Alternative Work Schedules
For Federal Employees

This report provides information on a random sample of federal employees' and agency management views of alternative work schedules in the federal government. The information shows that generally, both groups believe alternative work schedules have had positive results.



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UNITED STATES GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20548

GENERAL GOVERNMENT
DIVISION

B-216021

The Honorable Patricia Schroeder
Chair, Task Force on Economic Security
Select Committee on Children,
Youth and Families
House of Representatives

Dear Madam Chair:

This report responds to your April 6, 1984, request for information on the alternative work schedule program in the federal government. In subsequent discussions with your office, we agreed to provide information on the attitudes of federal employees and managers' views of the program, particularly as they relate to the six areas of interest in the authorizing legislation.

Participants in the alternative work schedule program are not restricted to working a standard 5-day, 40-hour workweek. Alternative schedules may take a variety of forms. A flexible work schedule allows an employee to vary (within a 40-hour workweek and constraints set by the agency) the time he or she reports for duty and departs from work. A compressed work schedule is one which compresses the 40-hour workweek into less than 5 days or, alternatively, the 80 hour biweekly pay period into less than 10 working days. A third type of schedule, maxiflex, incorporates features of both flexible and compressed schedules.

The Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act, Public Law 95-390, which was initially enacted in 1978 and extended in 1982, expires in July 1985. According to the Office of Personnel Management, 41 federal agencies reported that, as of July 31, 1984, they had alternative work schedule programs with about 308,000 participating employees. However, based on the results of our questionnaire we estimate that 489,000 permanent employees work an alternative work schedule in the continental United States.

On March 28, 1985, we testified at a hearing held by the Subcommittee on Human Resources, House Post Office and Civil Service Committee, on H.R. 1534--a bill to make the program permanent. Although our work was not complete at that time, we reported that our preliminary analysis of federal managers' and employees' views and interviews with union officials indicated that, cumulatively, the advantages of alternative work schedules appeared to outweigh the disadvantages. We also expressed the opinion that the authorizing legislation should be made permanent. This report presents the final results of our review.

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

Our objectives were to gather and analyze employees' and managers' views on how alternative work schedules have affected the efficiency of government operations (e.g. productivity), mass transit facilities and traffic, levels of energy consumption, service to the public, increased opportunities for full-time and part-time employment, and employees' job satisfaction (e.g. morale) and nonwork life. Improvements in these six areas were specifically cited in the legislation as the objectives of the program. In addition, we also gathered views on how alternative work schedules have affected dependent care,¹ an area of special interest to the select committee.

To accomplish these objectives, we first sent a questionnaire to a randomly selected sample of about 2,700 executive branch employees throughout the continental United States, including employees and supervisors on either fixed or alternative work schedules. The sample results are projectable to an adjusted universe of 1.3 million employees in the continental United States. Second, we interviewed 24 officials responsible for personnel and labor relations functions at 11 federal agencies that used alternative work schedules. We conducted our review from April 1984 through May 1985. Further details concerning our objectives, scope, and methodology are presented in appendix I (p. 17) and appendix III (p. 33).

QUESTIONNAIRE HIGHLIGHTS

Our questionnaire addressed a wide range of issues associated with the alternative work schedule program. Following are the major questionnaire findings.

¹Care or supervision (e.g. nursing, babysitting, etc.) of adults or children living in the home that is provided at some time during the workday.

--74 percent of the employees indicated that they support the continuation of the program (see app. II, question 47);

--72 percent of the employees using alternative work schedules felt that the schedules gave them greater flexibility to meet family obligations (doctor's appointments, meetings, etc.) (see app. II, question 30.4);

--74 percent of the employees on an alternative work schedule believe the program has had a favorable or very favorable effect on their morale (see app. II, question 29.2);

--89 percent of the employees on an alternative work schedule who have a need for dependent care were satisfied or very satisfied with their work schedules, while 62 percent of the employees on a fixed schedule were satisfied or very satisfied (see app. I, table 9).

The percentages are based on the total number of usable questionnaires (1,976). Appendix II is a copy of our questionnaire showing the cumulative responses we received to each question.

AGENCY INTERVIEW RESULTS

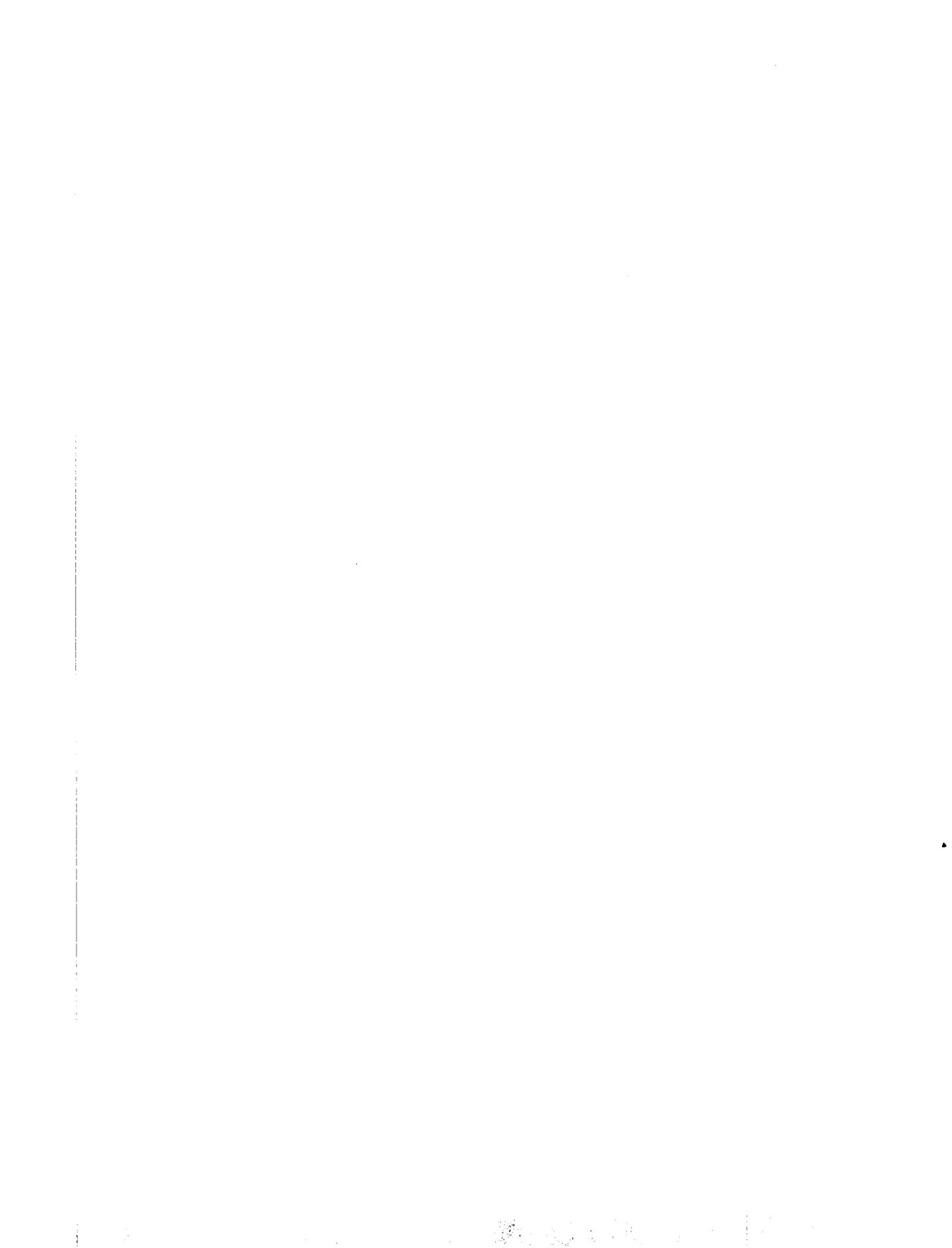
Personnel and labor relations officials at the 11 agencies we visited said that generally they have had positive experiences with alternative work schedules. They said that, overall, there have been improvements in service to the public, employee morale, efficiency of agency operations, and employment opportunities. Most agency officials stated that alternative work schedules had no effect on mass transit facilities, traffic congestion, or energy consumption. All agency officials said employees were able to devote more time to their families and personal interests as a result of alternative work schedules. Appendix III is a summary of our agency interviews.

As requested by your office, we did not obtain agency comments on the report. As arranged with your office, we will send copies of this report to interested parties and make copies available to others who request them.

Sincerely yours,

W. J. Anderson

William J. Anderson
Director



EMPLOYEES' VIEWS
OF ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

On November 29, 1984, we sent a questionnaire to a random sample of permanent executive branch employees in the continental United States. The questionnaire was designed to obtain the attitudes of federal employees about the alternative work schedules (AWS) program in their agencies.

We asked the employees to complete the questionnaire even if they were not participating in the AWS program. Completed questionnaires were received from 1,976 of the 2,633 employees in the sample, a response rate of 75 percent. About 63 percent of the respondents indicated that they work a fixed schedule while about 37 percent work an alternative work schedule.¹ (See app. II, question 14.) Of those employees working an alternative work schedule, 69 percent work a flexible schedule; 14.5 percent work a compressed schedule; 9.5 percent work a maxiflex schedule; and 2 percent work a part-time alternative work schedule. Five percent of these employees did not specify which schedule they used. (See app. II, questions 14 and 15.) We estimated that 489,000 permanent employees work an alternative work schedule in the continental United States.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The following sections provide a discussion of employees' responses. Specifically, the data includes responses we received concerning the

- characteristics of the respondents--their age, sex, marital status, dependent care needs, geographical work areas, and type of job held;
- views of those participating in the AWS program regarding the effect of AWS on each of the six congressional areas of interest;

¹There are two general categories of alternative work schedules: flexible and compressed workweeks. A flexible work schedule allows an employee to vary (within constraints set by the agency) the time he or she reports for duty and departs from work. A compressed schedule is one which compresses the 40-hour biweekly pay period into less than 10 working days. A third type of schedule, maxiflex, incorporates features of both flexible and compressed schedules.

--impact which AWS has had on employees with dependent care needs; and

--opinions of employees, regardless of work schedules, as to whether the AWS program should be continued and whether the advantages of AWS outweigh its disadvantages.

Respondent characteristics

We asked questions to determine the age, sex, marital status, dependent care needs, geographic work areas and populations, and job types of the respondents. This data appears in tables 1 and 2.

TABLE 1
CHARACTERISTICS OF AWS AND FIXED
SCHEDULE EMPLOYEES

<u>Characteristic</u>	<u>AWS</u>	<u>Fixed Schedule</u>
Q 2. <u>Age:</u>	----- (percent) -----	
Under 20	*	*
20 to 24	3	3
25 to 29	10	9
30 to 34	15	15
35 to 44	34	29
45 to 54	24	26
55 to 65	13	17
Over 65	1	1
Total	<u>100^a</u>	<u>100^a</u>
Q 3. <u>Sex:</u>		
Female	39	39
Male	61	61
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Q 4. <u>Marital Status:</u>		
Married	73	72
Not married	27	28
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Q 5. <u>Dependent Care:</u>		
Yes, adults	2	2
Yes, children		
and adults	28	28
Yes, children	1	1
No	69	69
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

^aDoes not add due to rounding.

*Less than 1 percent.

TABLE 2
CHARACTERISTICS OF AWS AND FIXED SCHEDULE
EMPLOYEES

<u>Geographic area</u>	<u>AWS Schedule</u>	<u>Fixed Schedule</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
Metropolitan Washington, D.C.	19	13
Northeast	16	13
South	20	26
North Central	17	11
Plains and Northwest	11	15
Southwest	18	23
Total	<u>100^a</u>	<u>100^a</u>
<u>Work area - population</u>		
Large city: over 100,000	63	48
City: 50,000 to 100,000	14	20
City or town under 50,000	18	26
Other	5	6
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
<u>Job type</u>		
Administrative or managerial	22	23
Professional or technical	57	41
Secretarial or clerical	13	15
Trade, craft, or labor	6	18
Other	3	2
Total	<u>100^a</u>	<u>100^a</u>

^aDoes not add due to rounding.

Impact of AWS on the six areas
of congressional interest

We were particularly interested in assessing the impact of the AWS program on the six areas of congressional interest: employee job satisfaction and nonwork life, efficiency of government operations, levels of energy consumption, mass transit facilities and traffic, service to the public, and increased opportunities for full-time and part-time employment. The results concerning these areas follow.

Job satisfaction and nonwork life

We asked AWS employees what effect AWS had on their job performance, morale, and ability to match work hours with their workload. Sixty-three percent, 74 percent, and 61 percent of the employees said that AWS had a very favorable or favorable effect on their job performance, morale, and ability to match work hours with workload, respectively. (See app. II, question 29.)

We also asked supervisors of employees on alternative work schedules to assess the effect of AWS on their subordinates' morale. Combining the response of the three categories reflecting a positive result, 69 percent of the supervisors indicated that AWS had a very favorable, favorable, or slightly favorable effect. (See app. II, question 42.) Table 3 presents these results.

In addition, we asked AWS employees what effect AWS had on their nonwork life activities. Seventy-two percent indicated that AWS helped them to better meet family obligations, and about 63 percent indicated AWS allowed them to participate in more leisure-time activities (See app. II, question 30.) The responses are shown in table 4.

Efficiency of government operations

We asked AWS employees whether AWS has increased, decreased, or had no effect on their productivity. We also asked supervisors (some using AWS themselves) what effect AWS had on the productivity of these employees. Combining the responses of the three categories reflecting an increase (greatly increased, substantially increased, and somewhat increased), 51 percent of those on AWS indicated their productivity had increased, and 42 percent of supervisors indicated that their subordinates' productivity had increased. However, approximately 29 percent of employees and 27 percent of supervisors indicated that the AWS schedule had little or no effect on their own productivity or their subordinates' productivity, respectively. (See app. II, questions 38 and 43.) Table 5 shows the results concerning this area.

Energy consumption

We asked AWS employees whether AWS had increased, decreased, or had no effect on gasoline consumption in their automobiles. Thirty-seven percent indicated that their gasoline consumption had decreased or greatly decreased. However, 40 percent indicated that AWS had had no effect on gasoline consumption (See app. II, question 33.) These results are summarized in table 6.

TABLE 3
JOB SATISFACTION - SELECTED ITEMS

FOR AWS EMPLOYEES:

Q 29. AWS may or may not have an effect on your job satisfaction. Please indicate below how favorable or unfavorable an effect, if any, AWS has had on you in each of the following work-related areas?

<u>Effect</u>	<u>Work-related areas</u>		<u>Match work hours with workload</u>
	<u>Job performance</u>	<u>Morale</u>	
	----- (percent) -----		
Very favorable or favorable	63	74	61
Neither	17	7	15
Very unfavorable or unfavorable	6	7	7
Don't know or not applicable	3	1	5
Nonresponse	<u>11</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>12</u>
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

FOR SUPERVISORS OF AWS EMPLOYEES

Q 42. In your work unit, how favorable or unfavorable an effect, if any, has AWS had on each of the following aspects of work?

<u>Effect on your subordinates' morale:</u>	<u>Percent^a</u>
Very favorable, favorable, slightly favorable	69
No effect	10
Very unfavorable, unfavorable, slightly unfavorable	2
No basis to judge	5
Nonresponse	<u>13</u>
Total	<u>100</u>

^aDoes not add due to rounding.

TABLE 4
NONWORK LIFE - SELECTED ITEMS

FOR AWS PARTICIPANTS:

Q 30. One of the purposes of AWS was to provide greater flexibility in scheduling nonwork activities. Are any of the nonwork activities listed below ones that you were able to start doing, or do more of, as a result of being in the AWS program?

<u>Provide greater flexibility</u>	<u>Area</u>	
	<u>Meet family obligations</u>	<u>Participate in leisure-time activities</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
Yes	72	63
No	15	22
Nonresponse	<u>13</u>	<u>15</u>
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

TABLE 5EFFICIENCY OF GOVERNMENT OPERATIONS - SELECTED ITEMS

FOR AWS EMPLOYEES:

Q 38. Compared to what your productivity might be under a fixed schedule, has AWS increased, decreased, or had no effect on your productivity?

<u>Effect</u>	<u>Percent^a</u>
Greatly increased (60% or more)	4
Substantially increased (30% - 59%)	12
Somewhat increased (15% - 29%)	35
Little or no effect	29
Somewhat decreased (15% - 29%)	3
Substantially decreased (30% - 59%)	1
Greatly decreased (60% or more)	1
No basis to judge	4
Nonresponse	<u>12</u>
Total	<u>100</u>

FOR SUPERVISORS OF AWS EMPLOYEES

Q 43. Compared to what their productivity might be under a fixed schedule, has AWS increased, decreased, or had no effect on your subordinates' productivity?

<u>Effect</u>	<u>Percent^a</u>
Greatly increased (60% or more)	2
Substantially increased (30% - 59%)	11
Somewhat increased (15% - 29%)	29
Little or no effect	27
Somewhat decreased (15% - 29%)	7
Substantially decreased (30% - 59%)	2
Greatly decreased (60% or more)	*
No basis to judge	8
Nonresponse	<u>15</u>
Total	<u>100</u>

^aDoes not add due to rounding.

*Less than one percent.

TABLE 6
ENERGY CONSUMPTION - SELECTED ITEM

FOR AWS PARTICIPANTS:

Q 33. Compared to a fixed schedule, does AWS increase, decrease, or have no effect on the following aspects of your commuting to and from work?

<u>Effect on consumption of gasoline:</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Greatly increased	1
Increased	2
No effect	40
Decreased	29
Greatly decreased	8
No basis to judge	6
Nonresponse	<u>14</u>
Total	<u>100</u>

Mass transit facilities

We asked AWS employees whether AWS had increased, decreased, or had no effect on several aspects of their commute to and from work. Fifty-seven percent indicated that the degree of traffic congestion they experienced had decreased or greatly decreased as a result of AWS. Also, 53 percent indicated that the amount of time they spent commuting decreased or greatly decreased for the same reason. (See app. II, question 33.) Table 7 summarizes these results.

Service to the public

We asked AWS employees whether AWS had increased, decreased, or had no effect on their work unit's ability to provide direct service to the public. Fifty-two percent indicated that AWS has had no effect and thirty-seven percent indicated that AWS had increased or greatly increased their work unit's ability to provide service to the public. (See app. II, question 36.) The results are summarized in table 8.

TABLE 7MASS TRANSIT FACILITIES AND
TRANSIT - SELECTED ITEMS

FOR AWS PARTICIPANTS:

Q 33. Compared to a fixed schedule, does AWS increase, decrease, or have no effect on the following aspects of your commuting to and from work?

<u>Effect</u>	<u>Degree of traffic congestion</u>	<u>Amount of time spent commuting</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
Greatly increased	1	1
Increased	2	2
No effect	21	27
Decreased	35	38
Greatly decreased	22	15
No basis to judge	5	4
Nonresponse	<u>13</u>	<u>13</u>
Total	<u>100^a</u>	<u>100</u>

^aDoes not add due to rounding.

TABLE 8SERVICE TO THE PUBLIC - SELECTED ITEM

Q 36. Compared to a fixed schedule, has AWS increased, decreased, or had no effect on your work unit's ability to provide direct services to the public?

<u>Effect^a</u>	<u>Percent</u>
Greatly increased	8
Increased	29
No effect	52
Decreased	4
Greatly decreased	0
No basis to judge	<u>7</u>
Total	<u>100</u>

^aBecause the questionnaire directed some respondents to skip this question, it was not possible to determine a nonresponse category.

Increased employment opportunities

We asked supervisors of employees who work AWS how favorable or unfavorable an effect, if any, AWS had on recruiting or retaining employees. We did not use the results of this question because 42 percent or more of the supervisors either did not respond to the question or indicated that recruiting and/or retaining employees was not applicable in their area of responsibility. (See app. II, question 44.)

Impact of AWS on dependent care

One of the purposes of AWS was to provide greater flexibility in scheduling nonwork activities such as family obligations and dependent care arrangements.

We considered the impact of AWS on dependent care from two perspectives. First, for those employees with dependents needing care (see table 9), we asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with their work schedule. To gain additional insights, we compared these results to those reported by employees without dependents (see table 9). We found that those with and without dependents reported higher rates of satisfaction when working under an AWS schedule as shown below.

<u>Work Schedule Satisfaction Level</u>	<u>With dependents</u>	<u>Without dependents</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
AWS - very satisfied/satisfied	89	93
Fixed - very satisfied/satisfied	62	75

The lowest level of satisfaction (62 percent) was reported by those on fixed work schedules with dependent care needs. (See app. II, question 20.)

We also asked employees whether they preferred to continue their current work schedule or whether they preferred to change their schedule to provide more or less flexibility. As shown in table 10, a greater proportion of employees on fixed schedules consistently reported that they would prefer to increase their work schedule flexibility. Comparing responses on the preference for more work schedule flexibility, we found the following.

<u>Work Schedule Satisfaction</u>	<u>With dependents</u>	<u>Without dependents</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
AWS - Increased flexibility	43	34
Fixed - Increased flexibility	56	42

As shown above, those employees who are working on fixed work schedules and have dependent care needs reported the greatest desire for more schedule flexibility (56 percent). (See app. II, questions 5, 20, and 21.)

TABLE 9
WORK SCHEDULE SATISFACTION

Q 20. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the work schedule you generally use?

FOR THOSE WITH DEPENDENTS NEEDING CARE:

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>AWS</u>	<u>Fixed Schedule</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
Very satisfied	52	21
Satisfied	37	41
Uncertain	3	12
Dissatisfied	5	18
Very dissatisfied	<u>3</u>	<u>7</u>
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100^a</u>

FOR THOSE WITHOUT DEPENDENTS:

<u>Satisfaction</u>	<u>AWS</u>	<u>Fixed schedule</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
Very satisfied	62	31
Satisfied	31	44
Uncertain	2	8
Dissatisfied	4	12
Very dissatisfied	<u>1</u>	<u>5</u>
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>

^aDoes not add due to rounding.

TABLE 10
WORK SCHEDULE PREFERENCE

Q 21. Which of the following best describes your preference about the work schedule you are currently using?

FOR THOSE WITH DEPENDENTS NEEDING CARE:

<u>Preference</u>	<u>AWS</u>	<u>Fixed schedule</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
Continue current one as is	50	37
Increase flexibility	43	56
Decrease flexibility	2	1
Other	<u>5</u>	<u>7</u>
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100^a</u>

FOR THOSE WITHOUT DEPENDENTS:

<u>Preference</u>	<u>AWS</u>	<u>Fixed schedule</u>
	----- (percent) -----	
Continue current one, as is	59	52
Increase flexibility	34	42
Allow less flexibility	3	1
Other	<u>4</u>	<u>6</u>
Total	<u>100</u>	<u>100^a</u>

^aDoes not add due to rounding.

Continuation and advantages
of AWS program

We asked employees their views about whether the AWS program should be continued. We also asked their views about whether the advantages of the program outweighed its disadvantages. On the first question, 74 percent of the employees indicated that the AWS program should be continued; 7 percent said the program should not be continued; and 19 percent did not respond. Also, 50 percent believed the advantages of AWS either greatly outweighed, outweighed, or slightly outweighed the disadvantages; 22 percent had no basis to judge; 5 percent believed the disadvantages either greatly outweighed, outweighed, or slightly outweighed the advantages; 7 percent believed the advantages and disadvantages balanced out; and 15 percent did not respond. (These results are summarized in table 11.) (See app. II, questions 46 and 47.)

TABLE 11EMPLOYEES' ATTITUDES ON AWS PROGRAM

Q 47. The authorization for the federal AWS program expires in July 1985. In your opinion, should the program be continued or discontinued?

	<u>Percent</u>
Continue AWS program	74
Discontinue AWS program	7
Nonresponse	<u>19</u>
Total	<u>100</u>

Q 46. AWS probably has some advantages and disadvantages to employees, management and/or the organization. On balance, do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, or not?

	<u>Percent</u>
Advantages greatly outweigh disadvantages	23
Advantages outweigh disadvantages	22
Advantages slightly outweigh disadvantages	5
Advantages and disadvantages balance out	7
Disadvantages slightly outweigh advantages	2
Disadvantages outweigh advantages	2
Disadvantages greatly outweigh advantages	1
No basis to judge	22
Nonresponse	<u>15</u>
Total	<u>100^a</u>

^aDoes not add due to rounding.

QUESTIONNAIRE OBJECTIVES,
SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

To obtain federal employees' attitudes on alternative work schedules we sent a questionnaire to a randomly selected sample of federal employees. At our request the Office of Personnel Management (OPM) selected this random sample from its Central Personnel Data File. The sample was to include only permanent employees (full-time and part-time) who worked for executive branch agencies in the contiguous United States. The sample excluded employees in the Postal Service and the Senior Executive Service.

Questionnaire response rate

OPM provided us with a sample of 2,688 employees which was projectable to the universe of 1,823,180 (consisting of permanent federal employees in the continental United States). Analysis of the responses showed that certain employees should not have been included in the sample, that is, 55 respondents were employed outside the contiguous United States or were not permanent employees. Thus, our final sample included 2,633 employees. The sample results are projectable to an adjusted universe of 1.3 million employees in the continental United States. The 1.3 million is projected based on the 1,976 questionnaires we received.

The following table summarizes the questionnaire returns.

<u>Questionnaire returns</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Percent of eligible questionnaires</u>
Usable returns	1,976	75
Nondeliverable because incorrect address from OPM	44	2
Nondeliverable because of no record of employment at agency given by OPM	81	3
Questionnaire delivered but employees no longer at address given by OPM	160	6
Questionnaire failed edit check or employee did not answer	30	1
Questionnaire delivered but not returned	<u>342</u>	<u>13</u>
Eligible returns	2,633	100
Returns not eligible ^a	<u>55</u>	<u>2</u>
Total	<u>2,688</u>	

^aEmployees who were not in contiguous United States or not permanent employees.

Item nonresponse rate

Not all respondents to our questionnaire answered all the questions.

Overall, the average nonresponse rate per item was 11 percent. The item nonresponse rate varied from questionnaire item to item. The item nonresponse rates for those questions at the end of the questionnaire tended to be higher than for those items in the beginning of the questionnaire. We believe that this may have been due to respondent fatigue or misinterpretation of the instructions.

We computed average nonresponse rates for sections of the questionnaire. The average nonresponse rate per item for questions in sections I and II (background and work schedule information was 4 percent). For sections III (AWS impact) and section IV (supervisors' section), excluding open-ended response categories and the item asking the impact of AWS on providing direct service to the public (see table 8), the average nonresponse rate was 14 percent. The item nonresponse rates for the three remaining questions in section IV (i.e., the questions on the advantages of AWS outweighing the disadvantages, continuing AWS, and changing AWS) were moderate or large (15 percent, 19 percent, and 26 percent, respectively).

Sampling errors

For estimates in this report the sampling error varied depending on the group of respondents. The sampling errors for estimates in tables based only on those with dependents would not exceed +6.6 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level while for all remaining estimates the sampling error would not exceed +4.6 percentage points at the 95 percent confidence level.

U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE
 SURVEY OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES' ATTITUDES ON ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

INSTRUCTIONS

The U.S. General Accounting Office, an agency of the Congress, is reviewing the federal government's Alternative Work Schedules (AWS) program which allows employees to choose flexible or compressed work schedules.

The AWS program was authorized on an experimental basis in 1979 and later re-authorized by the Federal Employees Flexible and Compressed Work Schedules Act of 1982.

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain the opinions of federal employees and managers about the AWS program. (We would like you to fill out the questionnaire even if you are not currently participating in the AWS program.) Part I of the questionnaire requests background information. Part II requests information on the type of work schedule you use. Part III (to be answered only by employees participating in the AWS program) asks questions about the impact of AWS on such factors as job satisfaction and service to the public. Part IV (to be answered only by supervisors) asks questions about supervisors' views on the AWS program.

Your responses will be treated confidentially. They will be combined with others and reported only in summary form. The questionnaire is numbered only to aid us in our followup efforts and will not be used to identify you with your response. We are asking for your help. We cannot make a meaningful assessment without your frank and honest answers.

Throughout this questionnaire there are numbers printed within parentheses to assist our keypunchers in keying responses for computer analysis. Please disregard these numbers.

The questionnaire should take approximately 20 minutes to complete. Most of the questions can be readily answered by either checking a box or filling in a blank. If you have any questions, please call Sandra Saseen or Joseph Covas on FTS 632-5517.

Please complete the questionnaire and return it in the pre-addressed envelope within 5 days of receipt. In the event that the envelope is misplaced, the return address is:

Ms. Sandra M. Saseen
 U.S. General Accounting Office
 Room 3150
 441 G Street, NW
 Washington, D.C. 20548

I. BACKGROUND

1. What is your current pay category and grade, for example, GS-5, or WG-9? (ENTER PAY CATEGORY AND NUMBER.) (7-10)

Pay Category	Grade	Non-respondents	Respondents
		120	1856

2. What is your age? (CHECK ONE.) (11)

- 1. [2] Under 20 years
 - 2. [58] 20 to 24 years
 - 3. [184] 25 to 29 years
 - 4. [292] 30 to 34 years
 - 5. [608] 35 to 44 years
 - 6. [508] 45 to 54 years
 - 7. [302] 55 to 65 years
 - 8. [19] Over 65 years
- Non-respondents = 3
 Respondents = 1973

3. What is your sex? (12)

- 1. [764] Female
 - 2. [1186] Male
- Non-respondents = 26
 Respondents = 1950

4. What is your marital status? (13)

- 1. [1431] Married
 - 2. [539] Single, divorced, widowed, or legally separated
- Non-respondents = 6
 Respondents = 1970

5. Are there any adults or children living in your home who require care or supervision (e.g., nursing, babysitting) at some time during the workday? (CHECK ONE.) (14)

- 1. [40] Yes, adult(s) needing care
- 2. [545] Yes, child (children) needing care
- 3. [22] Yes, adult(s) and child (children) needing care
- 4. [1365] No

Non-respondents = 4
 Respondents = 197

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6. How many children in the following categories do you have living at your home? (ENTER NUMBERS.) (IF YOU HAVE NO CHILDREN LIVING AT HOME, CHECK "1.") DID NOT USE THIS QUESTION
- 1. [] There are no children at home (15)
 - 2. [] 5 years old or under (16)
 - 3. [] 6-11 years old (17)
 - 4. [] 12-14 years old (18)
 - 5. [] 15 or older, in school full-time (19)
 - 6. [] 15 or older, in school part-time (20)
 - 7. [] Number that are working full-time (21)
 - 8. [] Other, please specify (22)

7. In which of the following geographical areas do you work? (CHECK ONE.) (23)

- 1. [292] METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. (including suburban Maryland and Virginia)
- 2. [272] NORTHEAST (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont)
- 3. [456] SOUTH (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia)
- 4. [258] NORTH CENTRAL (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, Wisconsin)
- 5. [257] PLAINS AND NORTHWEST (Colorado, Idaho, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Oregon, South Dakota, Utah, Washington, Wyoming)
- 6. [408] SOUTHWEST (Arizona, California, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Texas)

Non-respondents 33
Respondents = 1943

APPENDIX II

8. Which of the following best describes the area in which you work? (CHECK ONE.) (24)

- 1. [1031] Large city-population over 100,000
- 2. [348] City with population between 50,000 and 100,000
- 3. [445] City or town with population under 50,000
- 4. [107] Other, please specify _____
Non-respondents = 45 Respondents = 1931

9. Which of the following types of transportation do you primarily use to get to work? (CHECK ONE.) (25)

- 1. [26] Walk
Non-respondents = 44
Respondents = 1932
- 2. [1259] Drive alone
- 3. [443] Carpool or vanpool
- 4. [171] Bus, train, or subway
- 5. [11] Motorcycle or bicycle
- 6. [1] Taxi
- 7. [21] Other, please specify _____

10. What is your work schedule and appointment? (CHECK ONE.) (26)

- Non-respondents = 15 Respondents = 1961
- 1. [1889] Full-time, permanent appointment
- 2. [54] Part-time, permanent appointment
- 3. [18] Other, please specify _____

Which of the following best describes the work you do? (CHECK ONE.) (27)

- Non-respondents = 50 Respondents = 1926
- 1. [440] Administrative or managerial
- 2. [901] Professional or technical
- 3. [277] Secretarial or clerical
- 4. [262] Trade, craft, or labor
- 5. [46] Other, please specify _____

12. Were you a civilian employee in the federal government immediately prior to 1979, when the Alternative Work Schedules program was established? (28)

- 1. [1440] Yes
Non-respondent = 36
- 2. [500] No
Respondents = 1940

11. WORK SCHEDULES

13. Consider a recent typical 2-week pay period, one during which you were not on sick leave or on vacation. Enter below your actual schedule for starting and ending work each day and the total hours worked each day.

	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	
TIME IN															(29-42)
TIME OUT															
TOTAL HOURS WORKED															(43-70)

FIXED SCHEDULE DEFINITION:

A fixed work schedule requires full-time employees to meet all of the following conditions:

- .A 5-day workweek
- .A 40-hour week
- .The same fixed starting and stopping times every workday.
- .No choice as to which time to report to work.

For part-time employees, a fixed schedule means that, for the days you work, you have fixed hours.

14. Using the above definition, do you use a fixed work schedule? (71)

1. (1237) Yes (SKIP TO QUESTION 16.)
2. (721) No (CONTINUE.)

Non-respondents= 18
 Respondents= 1958

ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES

There are two general categories of Alternative Work Schedules: FLEXIBLE and COMPRESSED workweeks. A FLEXIBLE schedule allows an employee to vary (within constraints set by the agency) the time he or she reports for duty and departs from work. A COMPRESSED workweek is one which compresses the 40-hour workweek into less than 5 days or, alternatively, the 80-hour bi-weekly pay period into less than 10 working days. In addition, a third type of schedule, MAXIFLEX, incorporates features of both flexible and compressed schedules.

15. Please indicate below which type of alternative work schedule 1) FLEXIBLE, 2) MAXIFLEX, or 3) COMPRESSED you use. (IF YOU ARE A PART-TIME EMPLOYEE, PLEASE WRITE IN YOUR TYPE OF SCHEDULE IN ITEM 4.) (BEFORE ANSWERING, PLEASE READ THROUGH THE ENTIRE LIST. IF YOU ARE NOT CERTAIN WHICH TYPE OF SCHEDULE YOU USE, CHECK WITH YOUR SUPERVISOR.) (CHECK ONE.)

(72)

1. [495] FLEXIBLE WORK SCHEDULE

- Flexitour - Employee preselects starting time; may modify schedule with prior notification and approval of supervisor. Employee is limited to an 8-hour day/40-hour workweek, with no day off.
- Gliding Schedule - Within flexible bands, employee may vary starting time without prior notification or approval of supervisor. Employee is limited to an 8-hour day/40-hour workweek, with no day off.
- Variable Day - Employee may vary the length of the workday as long as he/she is present for daily core time* within limits established by the organization; must work or account for the basic work requirement, e.g., 40 hours per week with no day off.
- Variable Week - Employee may vary the length of the workday and workweek as long as he/she is present for daily core time*; must work or account for the basic work requirement, e.g., 80 hours in a biweekly pay period, with no day off.

3. [105] COMPRESSED WORK SCHEDULE

- 5-4/9 Plan - Employee works a fixed schedule that is limited to 8 days of approximately 9 hours a day and one 8-hour day permitting a day off in a biweekly pay period.
- 4-day week - Employee works a fixed schedule that is limited to four 10-hour days a week permitting a day off each week.

4. [13] PART-TIME SCHEDULE

Please specify

***CORE TIME DEFINITION:**
 Core time means those designated hours and days during the pay period when an employee on a FLEXIBLE schedule must be present for work.

2. [69] MAXIFLEX

- Employee may vary the length of the workday and workweek as long as he/she is present for core time*, which is scheduled on less than all 5 weekdays; must work or account for the basic work requirement, e.g., 80 hours in a biweekly pay period, permitting a day off or 2 days off.

Non-respondents= 39
 Respondents= 682

(CONTINUE TO ITEM 3, NEXT COLUMN.)

WORK UNIT DEFINITION:

If you supervise a group of employees, consider you and your group to be the work unit. If you do not supervise, consider your work unit to be all employees who report to your supervisor.

16. Does your work unit allow you to earn credit hours? (CHECK ONE.) (73)

- 1. [295] Yes Non-respondents 72
Respondents = 1904
 - 2. [1336] No
 - 3. [273] Don't know
- (SKIP TO QUESTION 18)

17. If yes, how many credit hours are you permitted to earn? (CHECK ONE.) (74)

- 1. [131] 10 hours or fewer Non-respondents 16
- 2. [148] 11 to 24 hours Respondents = 279

18. Approximately how long have you been on your present type of fixed, compressed, flexible, or maxiflex work schedule? (CHECK ONE.) (75)

- 1. [181] 1 year or less
- 2. [213] Between 1 and 2 years
- 3. [242] Between 2 and 3 years
- 4. [1283] 3 years or more

Non-respondents 57
Respondents = 1919

19. Was your AWS program established by a negotiated labor agreement? (CHECK ONE.) (76)

- 1. [328] Yes Non-respondents 198
- 2. [487] No Respondents = 1778
- 3. [963] Don't know

20. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the work schedule you generally use? (CHECK ONE.) (77)

- 1. [764] Very satisfied
- 2. [767] Satisfied Non-respondents 31
- 3. [130] Uncertain Respondents = 1945
- 4. [203] Dissatisfied
- 5. [81] Very dissatisfied

21. Which of the following best describes your preference about the work schedule you are currently using? (CHECK ONE.) (78)

- 1. [972] Prefer to continue the current one, as is
- 2. [821] Prefer to increase the flexibility, e.g., the number of schedules offered
- 3. [26] Prefer to allow less flexibility
- 4. [104] Other, please specify

Non-respondents 53 Respondents = 1923

22. What system does your work unit use to account for your time? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.) (79-83)

- 1. [1401] Work report form (e.g., time and attendance sheet)
 - 2. [389] Sign-in and sign-out sheet
 - 3. [229] Time clock
 - 4. [33] Serial log
 - 5. [174] Other, please specify
-

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23. To what extent, if any, do the following influence your choice of work hours? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.) IF YOU ARE ON A FIXED SCHEDULE, PLEASE CHECK "NOT APPLICABLE" FOR ITEMS 2, 3, 4.)

		1	2	3	4	5	6	
			Little or no extent	Some extent	Moderate extent	Great extent	Very great extent	Not applicable
1. Requirement of agency, supervisor or job	Non-respondents 168 Respondents=1808	287	167	177	365	637	175	
2. Transportation arrangements	Non-respondents 178 Respondents=1798	389	102	76	101	117	1013	
Childcare and household requirements	Non-respondents 187 Respondents=1789	356	93	63	66	88	1123	
4. Personal preference	Non-respondents 173 Respondents=1803	126	104	130	231	237	975	

24. In your work unit, has an AWS program been terminated within the last 5 years and not reinstated?

- 1. [102] Yes skip to question 27
 - 2. [1292] No Continue
 - 3. [492] Don't know
- Non-respondents 90 Respondents=1886

25. In your work unit, has an AWS program been altered within the last 5 years?

- 1. [200] Yes (Continue)
- 2. [1018] No Skip to note
- 3. [532] Don't know

Non-respondents 34 Respondents=1750

26. If yes, how was the AWS program altered?

- 1. [115] To increase flexibility
 - 2. [61] To decrease flexibility
 - 3. [16] Other, please specify
- Non-respondents 8 Respondents=192

27. Which of the following, if any, was cited for terminating or altering the AWS program? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

- 1. [60] Supervisor's opposition (91)
- 2. [26] Reduction of agency productivity (92)
- 3. [28] Diminished level of service to the
- 4. [12] Increased in cost of agency operations
- 5. [34] Loss of supervisory control
- 6. [23] Time and attendance abuses
- 7. [99] Don't know
- 8. [73] Other, please specify

28. Would you prefer to have AWS returned to the way it previously was?

- 1. [103] Yes
- 2. [138] No
- 3. [22] Uncertain
- 4. [21] Other, please specify

Non-respondents 18 Respondents=284

NOTE: If your work unit is not currently participating in the alternative work schedules program, that is, all employees in your unit have fixed starting and stopping times, please check this box [] and then skip to question 46. If your work unit is using AWS, continue question 29.

Note: 915 people indicated that their work unit was currently on AWS. Of these, 721 were AWS participants. Questions 29-37 in the following Section III are based on the 721 AWS participants; question 39 is based on the 915 respondents whose work unit is on AWS.

III. AWS IMPACT

FREQUENCIES OF THOSE ON AWS SCHEDULE

Part III of the survey is to be answered only by employees participating in the AWS program, that is, your work unit is not on a fixed schedule.

29. AWS may or may not have an effect on your job satisfaction. Please indicate below how favorable or unfavorable an effect, if any, AWS has had on you in each of the following work-related areas? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

Work Areas	Very unfavorable	Unfavorable	Neither favorable nor unfavorable	Favorable	Very favorable	Don't know	Not applicable	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
1. Your job performance Non-respondents = 80 Respondents = 641	29	11	125	214	241	8	13	(101)
2. Your morale Non-respondents = 81 Respondents = 640	35	12	53	208	322	4	6	(102)
3. Ability to match work hours with workload Non-respondents = 87 Respondents = 634	33	14	106	190	252	5	34	(103)
4. Other, please specify _____ Non-respondents = 635 Respondents = 86	4	6	3	6	38	3	26	(104)

30. One of the purposes of AWS was to provide greater flexibility in scheduling non-work activities. Are any of the non-work activities listed below ones that you were able to start doing, or do more of, as a result of being in the AWS program? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

Non-work Activities	YES	NO	
	1	2	
1. Attend school	167	415	Non-respondent s = 139; Respondent s = 582 (105)
2. Pursue professional interest	207	377	Non-respondent s = 137; Respondent s = 584 (106)
3. Participate in civic or volunteer activities	256	333	Non-respondent s = 132; Respondent s = 589 (107)
4. Meet family obligations without taking leave (for example, doctor's appointment, school meetings)	517	108	Non-respondent s = 96; Respondent s = 625 (108)
5. Participate in physical fitness activities	306	283	Non-respondent s = 132; Respondent s = 589 (109)
6. Participate in leisure-time activities	457	157	Non-respondent s = 107; Respondent s = 614 (110)
7. Other, please specify _____	38	36	Non-respondent s = 647; Respondent s = 74 (111)

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FREQUENCIES OF THOSE ON AWS SCHEDULES

31. If there are any adults or children living in your home who require care or supervision during the workday, how, if at all, has AWS affected the ease or difficulty of your arrangements for them? (CHECK ONE.) (1,2)

- 1. [413] Not applicable - no adults or children needing care
- 2. [145] Made arrangements easier
- 3. [57] No change in arrangements attributable to the AWS program
- 4. [3] Made arrangements more difficult

Non-respondent s= 103; Respondent s= 618

32. Compared to a fixed schedule, does AWS increase, decrease or have no effect on your usage of leave/overtime or leave accumulation? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

Leave/Overtime Usage	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Greatly increased</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Increased</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">No effect</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Decreased</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Greatly decreased</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">No basis to judge</div> </div>					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Use of sick leave	Non-respondent s=92 Respondent s=629					
	6	12	310	215	60	26
2. Use of annual leave	Non-respondent s=92 Respondent s=629					
	6	11	257	280	61	14
3. Use of paid overtime	Non-respondent s=105 Respondent s=616					
	5	28	351	54	16	162
4. Use of unpaid overtime	Non-respondent s=113 Respondent s=608					
	2	38	346	43	15	164

Leave Accumulation

1. Accumulation of sick leave	Non-respondent s=123 Respondent s=598					
	57	228	279	12	3	19
2. Accumulation of annual leave	Non-respondent s=124 Respondent s=597					
	51	246	269	13	3	15

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33. Compared to a fixed schedule, does AWS increase, decrease, or have no effect on the following aspects of your commuting to and from work? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

Commuting	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; text-align: center;"> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Greatly increased</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Increased</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">No effect</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Decreased</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Greatly decreased</div> <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">No basis to judge</div> </div>					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Degree of crowding you experience on public transit	Non-respondent s=105 Respondent s= 616					
	5	7	166	97	57	284
2. Degree of traffic congestion you experience	Non-respondent s= 94 Respondent s= 627					
	10	13	152	255	162	35
3. Amount of time you spend commuting	Non-respondent s= 95 Respondent s= 626					
	6	16	197	273	107	27
4. Consumption of gasoline	Non-respondent s= 99 Respondent s= 622					
	4	12	289	212	61	44
5. Opportunity to carpool	Non-respondent s= 95 Respondent s= 626					
	33	95	318	31	15	134
6. Opportunity to vanpool	Non-respondent s= 102 Respondent s= 619					
	14	43	314	17	9	222
7. Other, please specify	Non-respondent s= 651 Respondent s= 70					
	10	7	17	2	1	33

FREQUENCIES OF THOSE ON AWS SCHEDULES

34. In your opinion, as compared to a fixed work schedule, how favorable or unfavorable an effect, if any, has AWS had on each of the following operations in your work unit? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

Work Unit Operations	Very unfavorable	Unfavorable	No effect	Favorable	Very favorable	Not applicable	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1. Inter-/intra-office communication Non-respondents = 98; Respondents = 623	8	54	366	133	46	16	(8)
2. Employees' access to co-workers Non-respondents = 93; Respondents = 628	6	77	358	130	45	12	(9)
3. Employees' access to supervisor Non-respondents = 92; Respondents = 629	9	47	395	131	38	9	(10)
4. Phone and secretarial coverage Non-respondents = 95; Respondents = 626	11	86	345	115	40	29	(11)
5. Amount of uninterrupted work time Non-respondents = 94; Respondents = 627	8	19	206	260	126	8	(12)
6. Availability of staff for meeting Non-respondents = 100; Respondents = 621	9	63	387	104	30	28	(13)
7. Other, please specify _____ Non-respondents = 676; Respondents = 45	2	0	10	4	3	26	

35. To what extent, if any, does your work unit have contact with the public? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

Types of Public Contact	Very great extent	Great extent	Moderate extent	Some extent	Little or no extent	
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Face to face Non-respondents = 91 Respondents = 630	103	81	89	97	260	(15)
2. By telephone Non-respondents = 90 Respondents = 631	148	139	90	85	169	(16)
3. Written (letters, memos, cables, etc.) Non-respondents = 92; Respondents = 629	121	120	121	84	183	(17)

If you checked "Little or no extent" for all of the above, SKIP TO QUESTION 37.

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FREQUENCIES OF THOSE ON AWS SCHEDULES

36. Compared to a fixed schedule, has AWS increased, decreased, or had no effect on your work unit's ability to provide direct services to the public? (CHECK ONE.) (18)
1. [39] Greatly increased
 2. [139] Increased
 3. [253] No effect
 4. [18] Decreased Non-respondents = 240
 Respondents = 481
 5. [0] Greatly decreased
 6. [32] No basis to judge
37. Compared to a fixed schedule, has AWS increased, decreased, or had no effect on your work unit's hours of operation? (CHECK ONE.) (19)
1. [57] Greatly increased
 2. [251] Increased Non-respondents = 87
 3. [284] No effect Respondents = 634
 4. [11] Decreased
 5. [1] Greatly decreased
 6. [30] No basis to judge
38. Compared to what your productivity might be under a fixed schedule, has AWS increased, decreased, or had no effect on your productivity? (CHECK ONE.) (20)
1. [4] Greatly decreased (60% or more)
 2. [7] Substantially decreased (30%-59%)
 3. [20] Somewhat decreased (15%-29%)
 4. [209] Little or no effect
 5. [249] Somewhat increased (15%-29%)
 6. [90] Substantially increased (30%-59%)
 7. [27] Greatly increased (60% or more)
 8. [31] No basis to judge
Non-respondents = 84
Respondents = 637

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39. Even if you are not officially classified as a supervisor, do you routinely supervise one or more individuals on a day-to-day basis? (21)
1. [378] Yes (CONTINUE.)
 2. [473] No (SKIP TO QUESTION 46.)
- Non-respondents = 64
Respondents = 851

IV. SUPERVISORS SECTION

40. Approximately how many employees do you supervise?
- | | | |
|-----------|---------|----------------------|
| \bar{x} | = 11.69 | Non-respondents = 46 |
| Mdn | = 5 | Respondents = 332 |
41. Are any of your subordinates also supervisors?
1. [115] Yes Non-respondents = 27
 2. [236] No Respondents = 351

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42. In your work unit, how favorable or unfavorable an effect, if any, has AWS had on each of the following aspects of your work? (CHECK ONE BOX EACH ROW.)

Aspects of your work	Very unfavorable	Unfavorable	Slightly unfavorable	No effect	Slightly favorable	Favorable	Very favorable	No basis to judge	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
1. Your subordinates' availability for staff meetings	5	16	50	182	10	33	11	22	(27)
2. Your subordinates' morale	2	2	5	39	50	116	94	19	(28)
3. Your subordinates' sense of responsibility	4	4	15	102	32	105	44	20	(29)
4. The degree to which your subordinates arrive and leave work on time	3	6	25	109	35	76	52	20	(30)
5. Your ability to obtain information from subordinates	5	13	36	141	23	57	31	18	(31)
6. Your ability to obtain information from other supervisors	3	4	41	159	22	52	24	21	(32)
7. Your interpersonal relations with subordinates	4	3	12	133	34	84	39	18	(33)
8. Your satisfaction with your job as a supervisor	4	7	14	80	43	92	56	29	(34)
9. Amount of time available to you to plan and organize work	3	4	15	89	41	95	59	20	(35)
10. Other, please specify _____	0	0	1	6	0	2	1	25	

43. Compared to what their productivity might be under a fixed schedule, has AWS increased, decreased, or had no effect on your subordinates' productivity? (CHECK ONE.) (37)

- 1. [1] Greatly decreased (60% or more)
- 2. [6] Substantially decreased (30%-59%)
- 3. [27] Somewhat decreased (15%-29%)
- 4. [102] Little or no effect
- 5. [111] Somewhat increased (15%-29%)
- 6. [40] Substantially increased (30%-59%)
- 7. [7] Greatly increased (60% or more)
- 8. [29] No basis to judge

Non-respondent s= 55
Respondent s= 323

44. In your work unit, how favorable or unfavorable an effect, if any, has AWS had on recruiting and retaining employees? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.) (IF YOUR WORK UNIT IS NOT INVOLVED IN RECRUITING, PLEASE CHECK "NOT APPLICABLE.")

Recruiting, Retaining Employees	Very unfavorable	Unfavorable	No effect	Favorable	Very favorable	Not applicable	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1. Recruiting full-time employees	Non-respondent s= 57; Respondent s= 321						(38)
	2	3	94	57	32	133	
2. Recruiting part-time employees	Non-respondent s= 64; Respondent s= 314						(39)
	3	3	85	41	19	163	
. . .							
3. Retaining full-time employees	Non-respondent s= 61; Respondent s= 317						(40)
	2	3	102	71	41	98	
4. Retaining part-time employees	Non-respondent s= 69; Respondent s= 309						(41)
	2	3	95	39	28	142	

45. For those of you who were supervisors prior to the establishment of AWS in your agency, has AWS caused you to spend more, less, or about the same amount of time on each of the following activities? (CHECK ONE BOX IN EACH ROW.)

Those who were not supervisors prior to that time should check "Not applicable."

Amount of Time Now Spent on:	Much less time	Less time	Same amount of time	More time	Much more time	Not applicable	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
1. Coordinating work activities of subordinates	Non-respondent s= 56; Respondent s= 322						(42)
	2	9	105	40	3	163	
2. Assigning tasks to subordinates	Non-respondent s= 57; Respondent s= 321						(43)
	3	6	119	30	1	162	
3. Coordinating with other work units	Non-respondent s= 57; Respondent s= 321						(44)
	2	10	106	38	1	164	
4. Other related matters, please specify	Non-respondent s= 223; Respondent s= 155						(45)
	1	1	11	2	0	140	

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46. AWS probably has some advantages and disadvantages to employees, management and/or the organization. On balance, do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages, or not? (CHECK ONE.) (46)

- 1. [448] Advantages greatly outweigh disadvantages
- 2. [441] Advantages outweigh disadvantages
- 3. [107] Advantages slightly outweigh disadvantages
- 4. [137] Advantages and disadvantages balance out
- 5. [46] Disadvantages slightly outweigh advantages
- 6. [39] Disadvantages outweigh advantages
- 7. [27] Disadvantages greatly outweigh advantages
- 8. [442] No basis to judge

Non-respondents = 289; Respondents = 1687

47. The authorization for the federal AWS program expires in July 1985. In your opinion, should the program be continued or discontinued? (CHECK ONE.) (47)

- 1. [1467] Continue AWS program
- 2. [140] Discontinue AWS program

Non-respondents = 369; Respondents = 1607

48. If the AWS program is continued, should any changes be made? (48)

- 1. [621] Yes (CONTINUE.)
- 2. [845] No (SKIP TO QUESTION 50.)

Non-respondents = 510; Respondents = 1466

APPENDIX II

49. If the AWS program is continued, what changes should be made? (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY.)

- 1. [182] Fewer managerial controls (49)
- 2. [106] More managerial controls (50)
- 3. [104] Decrease core hours (51)
- 4. [117] Increase core hours (52)
- 5. [171] Other, please specify _____ (53)
- 6. [180] No opinion (54)

50. If you have comments related to the previous questions or suggestions for changes or improvements in the AWS program, please provide them in the space below or attach another sheet. (55)

- 1461 Had no comments
- 515 Had comments

Thank you for your assistance!

SUMMARY OF AGENCY INTERVIEWS

OBJECTIVES, SCOPE, AND METHODOLOGY

As part of our review of the use of AWS in the federal government, we obtained agency management accounts of the experiences they have had with their AWS programs at a random sample of 10 agencies which the Office of Personnel Management reported as having had experience with AWS. At the request of the subcommittee, we also obtained views from Library of Congress officials. The information we obtained was based solely on agency interviews.

The 11 agencies ranged from 250 to 230,000 in total civilian employment within the United States. The percent of employment covered by AWS programs in these agencies ranged from 5 percent to 100 percent. With one exception, all agencies have been using some form of AWS since 1979.

We interviewed top officials in the personnel and labor relations functions at each agency. During our interviews, we obtained information concerning AWS effects on six areas of congressional interest: efficiency of operations and productivity, public service, mass transit, energy consumption, employment opportunities, and employee job satisfaction (e.g. morale) and nonwork life.

ISOLATING THE EFFECT OF ALTERNATIVE WORK SCHEDULES IS DIFFICULT

In many instances, agency officials felt that changes in the six areas may have been affected by factors other than the AWS program. For example, a decrease in overtime hours at an agency could be the result of internal management pressure to reduce overtime and not the agency's introduction of an alternative work schedule. Similarly, a change in employee commuting habits could be attributed to other factors, such as the expansion of the subway system in Washington, D.C., and not the use of alternative work schedules. Because these work schedules do not exist in a vacuum, officials were uncertain as to the degree of change that could be attributed to the program.

INTERVIEW RESULTS

Officials at 9 of the 11 agencies felt there were more positive effects of AWS than negative effects. At one agency, officials felt the advantages and disadvantages were about even. Officials at the remaining agency were hesitant to comment because AWS had been in effect at that agency for a relatively short time. The following is a summary of the agency officials' views on AWS.

Efficiency of government operations

Officials at 6 of the 11 agencies stated that efficiency of operations had increased in work units participating in the program. They cited improved employee morale and productivity and decreases in overtime, tardiness, and short-term leave usage as contributing factors. Officials in two of these agencies stated that alternative work schedules were particularly successful in laboratory environments, noting an improved ability by employees to adjust to peak workload periods and possible reduced overtime costs. Officials at the five other agencies stated that AWS had no effect on the efficiency of agency operations.

Service to the public

Officials at 6 of the 11 agencies said that they believed alternative work schedules enhanced their ability to provide service to the public. They cited improvements such as extended office hours, better telephone coverage, and greater flexibility to schedule appointments with the public. For example, inspectors in one agency found working a flexible schedule had enhanced their ability to travel and perform on-site inspections on the same day.

Officials at three agencies perceived that AWS had no effect on providing service to the public, and officials at two agencies felt the advantages and disadvantages of AWS offset each other. For example, one official said the office was staffed more hours each day, but noted that the office was understaffed on Friday afternoons when many employees were taking advantage of their earned time off. However, none of the officials who cited problems with AWS viewed the net effect of the AWS program on public service to be negative.

Mass transit

Officials at seven agencies stated for various reasons that AWS had no effect on employees' use of mass transit facilities or traffic congestion. For example, officials in two of these agencies felt that the relatively small number of their employees located in a single urban location had little or no effect on mass transit.

The officials at the remaining four agencies cited positive effects for employees. The most commonly cited improvement was shorter commuting time due to traffic dispersion.

Energy consumption

Officials at eight agencies stated that AWS had no effect on energy consumption. Reasons often cited were that no changes were made in contracting for air conditioning or heating to accommodate flexible schedule use, and many employees worked late before flexible schedules were initiated so heating and lighting were already available during odd hours. The officials at the remaining three agencies noted slight increases in energy costs associated with AWS because of the extended use of agency facilities.

Employment opportunities

Officials at six agencies said that employment opportunities with their agencies were enhanced with the introduction of AWS. They felt that AWS was a positive tool in recruiting talented employees as well as retaining employees who might otherwise have stopped working or looked elsewhere for employment. Officials at one of these agencies specifically noted that AWS had improved their ability to recruit and retain health care professionals. Another official said AWS enhanced recruitment of employees for a remote desert facility. Other positive effects of flexible schedules cited were that AWS made it easier for working parents to enter and stay in the workforce and that they aided in the recruitment of part-time and handicapped individuals. The officials at the remaining five agencies stated that AWS had no effect on employment opportunities at their agencies.

Employee morale

The final area of impact received an overwhelmingly positive response--officials at all 11 agencies stated that there was an improvement in employee morale as a result of AWS. They said employees on AWS were more satisfied with their jobs and were able to devote more time to their families and personal interests.





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